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DE RUEHIL #2527 1571518
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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9665
INFO RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT PRIORITY 2526
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA PRIORITY 0183
RUEHKB/AMEMBASSY BAKU PRIORITY 0158
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK PRIORITY 4229
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO PRIORITY 1336
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 2103
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE PRIORITY
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 7165
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 5753
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1085
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 4861
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT PRIORITY 3260
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 6311
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 2533
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 0886
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 2440
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
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TAGS: [PK](#) [AF](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#)
SUBJECT: PAKISTAN SUPPORTS A CREDIBLE JIRGA

REF: KABUL 01868

Classified By: CDA Peter Bodde, Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (C) On June 6, Charge met with Minister of Culture (and Jirga Commission member) GG Jamal to discuss recent meetings between the Afghan and Pakistani Jirga Commissions. Jamal emphasized the commissions made significant progress, finalizing an agenda for the planned August jirga and bridging gaps on sensitive issues. At the same time, Jamal was concerned about Afghanistan's desire for international participation. He stressed that tribal leaders in Pakistan were already questioning the credibility of the jirga, and including UN and/or U.S. representatives in the jirga's proceedings - whether as observers or participants - would feed tribal perceptions that the jirga was "another plot by the West" not to be taken seriously. Traditionally, Jamal explained, there were no observers at jirgas, only participants.

¶2. (C) Jamal said the Afghan Jirga Commission also raised the prospect of participation of women in the August jirga. Both commissions worried about how women's participation would play with the majority of participants. Both sides also expressed desire to respect, to the maximum extent possible, the format of traditional jirgas. Jamal said allowing female participants would add a new, unfamiliar, and potentially discomfiting dimension to the jirga process. (Note: Jamal is one of the most liberal Pashtuns we know. We believe his comments reflect his desire for a successful jirga, not any negative views toward women. End Note.)

¶3. (C) Comment: Pakistan believes in holding a credible joint jirga that initiates on-going cross-border dialogue on stemming militancy, fighting poppy cultivation and

trafficking, and strengthening people-to-people as well as governmental ties. Without taking steps to ensure the August jirga remains credible in the eyes of its participants, Pakistani Jirga Commission members feel this initial meeting will not live up to its expectations. We believe Pakistan's concerns over international participation in the jirga are legitimate and should be given serious consideration.

BODDE